

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention provides an information providing apparatus and method by which the amount of data to be transmitted when data of a program table composed of characters and images or the like are to be transmitted is reduced and it is made possible to cope with a change in contents of data rapidly. Data of an electronic program guide to be provided is hierarchized into data (A1 data) which may possibly be changed such as the broadcasting date, the start time and the end time, data (A2 data) which are not changed at all such as a program name, and data (A3 data) composed of still pictures, moving pictures, voice and so forth which have comparatively large data amounts, and for each medium, data of a hierarchy suitable for the medium is provided. Each A3 data is referred to by one or a plurality of A2 data, and each A2 data is referred to by one or a plurality of A1 data.